

AN
ESSAY

Towards making the

KNOWLEDGE

OF

RELIGION

EASY

To the meanest Capacity.

BEING

A short and plain Account of
the *Doctrines* and *Rules* of
CHRISTIANITY.

By his Grace EDWARD Lord
Archbishop of Tuam.

THE FIFTH EDITION.

*Follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace,
with them that call on the Lord out of a
pure heart. But foolish and unlearned
questions avoid, knowing that they do gen-
der strifes. 2 Tim. II. 22, 23.*

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T O T H E
R E A D E R.

If thou wantest Instruction in Religion, and art not furnished with better than what this little Book may afford thee, do not content thyself with once or twice reading of it, but read it over a great many Times; and if there be any passage in it which seems doubtful or difficult to thee, propose it to thy Minister, or to any other discreet and well instructed Christian, that may explain it to thee; and never leave off until thou art arrived to a clear Knowledge, and ready Remembrance, of all the things that are therein contained. And when thou art thus grounded in the Knowledge of Religion, set thyself to the diligent reading of the Holy Scriptures, and such other Books as may farther improve thee in it, and effectually stir thee up to the diligent Practice of it. *If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them.* John xiii. 17.

THE PREFACE

TOO many there are of those that profess Christianity, who understand but very little of true Design and Purport of it; and while they so little acquainted with that which ought to be Rule of their Faith and Actions, it is not to be wondered, that their Opinions are absurd and foolish, their Lives wicked.

Many good Sermons are preached, and Books published, for the Instruction of the People: But a Lecture, (however learn'd and rational) in any Art or Science, is not to be understood by any Man who is not first made acquainted with the general System of it; so Sermons and other excellent Discourses but lost to abundance of Men, for want of their being before-hand carefully grounded in the Knowledge of those things which generally all Christians do agree in.

I grant indeed, that such things as these Men ought to have learned, by attending on the Work of Christianising in their Younger Days: But where they have neglected this so necessary a thing in their Youth, ought in Charity to their Souls, to use the best and easiest Method we can to bring them to it in their Riper Years.

It has been the Judgment of some wise and learned Men, that the most effectual way under God, to bring all Christian People to a true and profitable understanding of, and steadiness in their Religion

The PREFACE.

ould be, to have a Set of plain and short Discourses
posed, equal in number to the Sundays in one
r, and plainly and fully containing the whole
y of Christianity; and to have one of these Dis-
ses read every Lord's Day in each Christian Con-
ation; and so to continue from one Year to ano-
r: And if Men could be content with wholesom
truction, and were not so strangely fond of No-
y, of Fancy, and variety of Expression, I think
ed that a better way than this could not be con-
ed.

And this very thing brought it into my Mind,
if any reasonable Draught of the whole Christi-
Religion could be made in very plain Language,
brought within the compass of one Hour's read-
: such a little sort of a Book being put into the
nds of those who have not Money to buy, or leisure
read those that are larger; and being often read
private by single Persons, in Families, and in Eng-
Schools, and being given in Parcels to Boys at
Latin School to translate, as their Sunday's Ex-
se, might be of extraordinary good use, in order
be imprinting, and for ever keeping fresh in their
nds and Memories, such Orthodox and necessary
ions of the Christian Doctrine, as may always
a most profitable Influence both upon their Faith
Practice. In pursuance of which Design, I have
posed this small Work; and should be very much
sed, if some judicious Person, who is a sufficient
ster both of clearness of Thought, and plainness as
as conciseness of Expression, would take the
thing in hand; who, I easily grant, might per-
it much better than I have done.

The Reader is to expect no more here, but a ge-
al Account of the necessary Doctrines and Pre-
ts of Christianity: My Proposal being only to give
of a mean Capacity a true Notion of these
things,

The P R E F A C E.

things, by way of a Foundation for farther Knowledge. And for the more particular handling of such Matters and Quotations of Scriptures upon which they rely, I refer them to those many Sermons and other excellent Discourses which they have such frequent Opportunities both of hearing and reading. I shall only add, that it may be of good use for a Man, as often as he intends to receive the Holy Communion, to read over this or some such other little Book, which may briefly put him in mind of all the Particulars of his Duty; and so be a help to him both in the recollecting of his Sins, and renewing of his holy Resolutions.



A N

ESSAY

Towards making the

Knowledge of Religion

E A S Y

To the meanest Capacity.

Being a short and plain Account of
the DOCTRINES and RULES of
CHRISTIANITY.

ALL that God requires from any Man,
in order to everlasting Happiness, is,
First, to believe those things which he
has made known; which is called
First: *Secondly*, to live according to the Rules
of Laws which he has given to us; which is
called *Obedience*: And, *Thirdly*, when a Man
finds that he has any way broken the Law of
God, to be sorrowful for it, to confess it to
God, to beg his Pardon for it, and diligently to
mend it for the time to come; which is called
Repentance.

Repentance. These three things then, namely *Faith, Obedience, and Repentance*, do contain the whole Substance of the Duty of every Christian.

I begin with the first of these three: And in order to enlighten the Mind, and strengthen the Faith of a Christian, I shall endeavour, *First*, to shew what are the chiefest of those things which God has made known to Mankind, in order to our Belief: And, *Secondly*, what Grounds and Assurance we have upon which to believe them.

As to the former of these, the things made known by God to be believed by us, are chiefly these:

First, That there is a God, who made the Heavens, the Earth, and all things therein contained; and has disposed all things in that most useful and beautiful order in which they still continue. That God is not a Body, like unto us, nor subject unto any such Frailties, or Imperfections as we are: But, that he is a Spirit, Eternal, without beginning, or ending, most holy, just and true, most gracious and merciful. That he knows all things, can do all things, and is present every where, without being confined to any place. And although there neither is nor can be more than one God, yet in the Unity of the Godhead or Divine Nature, there are three distinct Persons, of whom frequent mention is made in the Holy Scriptures; and to each of whom both the Name and Attributes of God are often ascrib'd. The first of these Persons is called the *Father*; the second the *Son*, and sometimes the *Word*; and the third the *Holy Ghost*, or *Spirit*. And this, in short, is the meaning of what we call the Doctrine of the Holy

ly, Blessed, and Undivided *Trinity*: which is
 be received and believed, because God has
 de it known to us, but ought not to be cu-
 ssly pryed into, because it is above our Un-
 standing to comprehend. As long as we are
 e in the Body, we see such things as these
 as *through a Glass darkly*; but when we shall
 advanced to the perfect state of the Blessed
 Heaven, then we shall see *face to face*, and
 w even as also we are known, 1 Cor. xiii. 12.

To the first of these Persons, namely, to the
 ber, the Holy Scriptures do more immediate-
 ascribe the Work of creating the World by
 Almighty Power, and of governing and or-
 ing it, and all things in it, by his good Pro-
 vidence.

As to the second of these Persons, who is
 led the *Son*, or the *Word*, we are taught to
 eve that he came down from Heaven, and
 k the Nature of Man upon him; and became
 an for our sake; like unto us in all things,
 only excepted: That he was conceived by
 Power of the Holy Spirit of God, in the
 womb of a pure Virgin, and born of her, where-
 he became both God and Man in one Per-
 son, was called by the Name of *Jesus* and *Christ*:
 and after he had lived a most pure and unspot-
 ed Life, was falsely accused by the People of the
 Jews before *Pontius Pilate* the Roman Gover-
 nor, and was put to the shameful and painful
 death of the Cross: And that it might fully ap-
 pear that he had suffered even unto Death, a
 spear was thrust into his Side while he was
 on the Cross; and after his Body was taken
 down, it was laid in a Sepulchre, and continued
 there without Life until the third Day.

Now

Now that we may understand how we are concerned in this matter, we must here take notice, that the first Man and Woman, *Adam* and *Eve*, whom God created at the beginning of the World, and from whom all Mankind are descended: This First Man and Woman, say, soon after they were created, did commit a very great Sin, and highly offended Almighty God, in eating of the Fruit of that Tree, which God had positively and strictly forbidden them to eat, under the threatening of a very great punishment. By this Sin of theirs, their Nature became weaken'd and corrupted, and very much inclined to Sin and Wickedness. And because the Nature of the Children must needs be like that of their Parents, the Corruption of the Nature of these two Persons, who were the common Parents of all Mankind, did communicate an universal Corruption of Nature to all the Posterity; by which all Mankind has ever since been naturally inclined to do those things which God has forbid, and to leave undone those things which he has commanded: which Corruption of our Nature is what we commonly call by the Name of *Original Sin*.

And besides this Original Sin, there is no Man (except *Jesus Christ*) who has lived to such an Age, as to be capable of governing and managing his own Actions; but what has committed many actual Sins and Transgressions; upon which Accounts we are all by Nature rendered unfit for, and incapable of, that Eternal Happiness which God had provided for us; and are become exposed to the Wrath of God, and to that Eternal Punishment which his Justice has prepared for Sinners.

is the sad and wretched Condition which Mankind by Nature are in, ever since the Sin of our first Parents. But notwithstanding that Adam had thus brought himself into this evil State; yet God in his infinite Mercy would not presently forsake, or wholly cast him off: But was pleased again to admit us all into a Capacity of being restored to his Favour, and to that eternal Happiness in the Life to come, of which our Original and Actual Sins had deprived us. In order to this, he condescended to send his Son into the World to take our Nature upon him, and to become our Redeemer; his Sufferings and Death being accepted of by God, as a Sacrifice and Propitiation for the Sins of the whole World: For the sake of which, and of his most holy and unspotted Life, God has been pleased to promise Pardon and Acceptance to all who, who either before or since *Christ's* coming into the World, have or shall embrace the Gospel Faith, heartily repent of their former Sins, and carefully lead their Lives according to the Laws and Commandments of God. And this which *Jesus Christ* has thus done and obtained for us, is commonly called by the Name of the *Work of our Redemption*.

Furthermore, we are taught to believe that *Christ* after his Death did descend into Hell. But since God has not thought it necessary in his Word to give us a clear and distinct account, either what place is meant by *Hell*, or for what reason *Christ* did descend thither, there is no reason why we should trouble ourselves with any curious enquiry into this Matter.

And after it had sufficiently appeared, that *Christ* was truly dead; upon the third Day, after

after his Death, he rose again to Life, appeared to his Apostles and very many of his Disciples, was seen and handled by them, and eat, drank, and conversed with them for the space of less than forty Days, (that in that time might have sufficient assurance of the reality of his Resurrection;) after which, in the sight of a multitude of them, he was openly taken up, and ascended into Heaven, where he remains in the highest Glory, which is called *sitting at the right Hand of God*; where he continues for ever to make Intercession with God for us.

Concerning the third Person in the Holy Trinity, who is called the *Holy Ghost* or *Holy Spirit*, because he works *Holiness* in us, we are taught to believe, that soon after *Christ's* Ascension to Heaven, the Holy Ghost being sent by the Father and the Son, and coming forth from the Father, did in a wonderful manner descend upon the Apostles and Disciples of *Christ*; enlightening their Minds and opening their Understanding, that they might understand the Holy Scriptures, and know the Will of God; giving them Gifts and Abilities to teach and preach the Gospel with Truth and Power; and enabling them to speak all sorts of Languages, that they might instruct all the several Nations and People of the World; and giving them Power to work Miracles, for the better confirming those things which they taught and preached. And although the Ministers and Preachers of the Gospel, do not appear in these Days to be endowed with the same miraculous Gifts and Abilities as the Apostles were, (there being other sufficient means for the instruction of the People, and confirmation of the true Faith and Religion;) yet are we assured, that where any Man in

est and lawful way, endeavours with Sincere and Diligence to improve his Understanding, to increase his Knowledge in the things that relate to God and Religion, for the good both of himself and others; the Holy Spirit of God is not wanting to such a Man, but will strengthen his pious and honest endeavours, and will more and more enlighten his Mind, that he may grow and increase in the knowledge of those things which are necessary both to his own and others Salvation. And thus the Holy Ghost is the immediate Author and Worker of those Gifts and Graces within us which are necessary to the *Edification*; that is to say, the Instruction of all Christian People.

And whereas by Nature we are all of us inclined to Evil, and unable of our selves to think of any thing as we should: the Holy Spirit of God, besides the enlightning of our Minds with the knowledge of those things which are necessary to Salvation, does also move and work upon our Conscience, our Will and Affections, in order to incline and bring us to, and assist us in the diligent and constant Practice of those things which God requires from us. And thus the Holy Ghost is also the Author of Goodness in us; (I mean, if we comply with his motions, and do not resist them,) which is called the Work of *Sanctification*.

The whole Congregation of People, who by outward preaching of the Gospel and the inward Motions of the Holy Spirit, have been moved, and brought to receive and embrace the Faith, and baptized in the Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; all these Persons, together with their Children, are called by the Name of the *Church of Christ*. And as a

King is the Head of his Kingdom, so is *Ch* the King and Head of his Church: And the very end and design of *Christ's* calling and gathering his Church, being the promoting of Godliness here, in order to Salvation hereafter for this reason the Church is said to be *holy*, though many Persons who are ungodly, outwardly appear and profess to be Christians and live in the visible Communion of the Church as one that is a Rebel in his Heart, may yet pretend to be a Subject, and live in outward society with those who are faithful to the Government.

Farthermore, As a Kingdom or Commonwealth by its Laws and Constitutions is but one Society, although evil Men may raise Factions, make Parties, and cause Divisions within it; our Saviour *Christ Jesus* appointed and called but *one* Church; in the *Communion* or Fellowship of which, all *Saints*, that is, all good Christians, are for ever to be joined and united, to partake in common of the Advantages and Privileges which God has promised to that Society; altho' by the Perverseness of some, the Mistakes of others, this same Church, which ought to be entirely one both in Faith and Obedience, is divided into contrary Parties, which refuse and renounce Communion with one another.

And whereas, before the coming of *Ch* the Church of God, that is to say the People whom God had outwardly called, and made known to Himself and his Will known unto them by the revealed Word; whereas this Church, I say, was then confined to one particular Place or Nation, that is to say, to the Temple of *Jerusalem*, and the Children of *Israel*. *Jesus Christ*

called all Nations and People indifferently to his Church, offering the Advantages and Privileges thereof, in as ample a manner to the Gentiles as to the Jews; and accepting of true Faith, Repentance, Obedience, and Worship, alike in all Parts and Places of the whole World: Upon which account the Church is called *Catholick*, that is to say, Universal.

As there is a Covenant, that is to say, a mutual Agreement or Promise made between a Husband and his Wife, a Master and his Servant, a King and his People: So in like manner, is there a Covenant made between God, in and through *Jesus Christ* on the one part and the Church on the other. Every Member of the Church for his part, promises and engages to perform those things which God requires in order to Salvation, which, at the beginning, I told you, were Faith, Obedience, and Repentance: And God, for his part, has promised, for the sake of *Jesus Christ*, that he will give the Grace and Assistance of his Holy Spirit to all those who make a good use thereof; that he will pardon the Sins of those who truly repent; that altho' when we die, our Bodies do return to the Earth out of which they were taken, as our Souls do to God that gave them, yet a Day shall come when this World shall have an end, and *Jesus Christ* shall come to judge all Mankind; at which time, the Bodies of Men shall be raised again, and reunited to their Souls; and whereas they who have lived wickedly and died impenitently, shall be condemned to eternal Torments, with the Devil and his Evil Spirits, who were cast out of Heaven for their rebellion against God; they who faithfully and sincerely perform those things which God requires, shall be rewarded with everlasting Happiness.

pineness and Joy in Heaven, in the Presence of God for evermore.

And thus we have heard, what are the objects of those things which God has made known to Mankind in order to our Belief: The next thing to be consider'd, is, what Grounds and Assurances we have, upon which we may and ought to believe them.

And here, in the first place, some of the things are to be believed, because we are assured of them by our own Reason and Understanding. Thus, for example, our own Reason informs us that the World was made and framed by Almighty God, because we see so much Order, Beauty and Usefulness, in the whole and every part of it; that God is Eternal, most Wise, Good, Just, Powerful and Perfect, because he is the first Cause of all things; that good Men shall be rewarded and wicked Men punished, because God is good and just, wise and powerful; and that these Rewards and Punishments shall be distributed in the Life which is to come, because we very often see wicked Men prosperous, and good Men much afflicted as long as they remain in this Life. These, I say, and some such things as these, abundantly taught us even by our Reason alone, and therefore ought to be received and believed even tho' God had not made them farther known unto us by any Revelation.

But, we have a farther ground to believe not only these and such like things as were last mentioned, but also all the rest of those things which I have been giving an account; and this is, because they are plainly contained in that Book which we commonly call the Holy Scriptures. To which Book we ought to give credit, because the Doctrine which is contained in that part of

which is called the *New Testament*, was confirmed not only by the Miracles and wonderful Works, but also by the Death and Sufferings of *Jesus Christ* and his Apostles, and many of his Disciples: And the other part of it, which is called the *Old Testament*, we ought to give the like Credit to also, because *Jesus Christ* and his Apostles so often in the *New Testament* give Testimony to the truth of it, and assure us, that it, as well as the *New*, was written by holy Men, who were inspired by the Holy Spirit of God.

And although the several parts of this Holy Book were originally written in such Languages as are not now generally understood by the common People; yet since God in his Providence, has all along stirred up the Spirits of so many holy and Learned Men, to bestow so much Care and Pains both in the keeping and preserving, and also in the translating and explaining of this Book, in every part of it; we may be very well assured, that if those who are unlearned, do give themselves diligently to the hearing and reading of it in such Languages as they do understand, and also are careful to receive and follow such Instructions as godly Men both by preaching and writing do give them out of it; God, who is good and merciful, will undoubtedly accept of them, because that in this case, they do all that is within their power to do, and more cannot with any reason be required from them.

But, if any Man should here tell me, that some of those things which the Holy Scripture propose to be believed, are far above our Knowledge and Capacity, and therefore that it seems impossible for us to give our assent to them, because we are not able to understand them: I answer, that if any Man would persuade me to believe

a thing which were plainly contrary to Sense and Reason, and should pretend that it were revealed by God, I should immediately in such a case refuse to comply or yield my assent, because I am sure, that a good and gracious God will never require such monstrous and absurd things from his Creatures : He never will impose it upon us to believe, that Bitter is Sweet, or Sweet Bitter ; that Darkness is Light, or Light Darkness ; that what we see, and feel, and taste, be a small Portion of Bread, is a Human Body, or, that one and the same Body can be entire in many several and far distant places at once. Such things as these, I say, I am sure God will never impose upon us to believe ; because he has so framed the Mind of Man, as to reject all such Absurdities and Contradictions as these, as soon as ever he hears them named. But as for things which do not appear to be absurd, but only as dark and obscure, and not contrary to our Understanding, altho', it may be, very far above it ; if God has thought fit to declare some such things as these unto us, there can be no reason why we should not give credit to them upon his Authority. A Man who is born blind, believes that there is such a thing as Light (altho' he knows not what it is) because all his Neighbours tell him so ; and if the Holy Scripture tells me, that there are three Persons in the Unity of the Divine Nature, and that the Divine and Human Nature are joined together in the single Person of *Christ*, why ought I not to give my assent to these things altho' I do not understand the manner of them ?

And thus I have given some Account of the first thing which God requires from us ; namely to believe what he has made known, which is called Faith. I proceed therefore to the second thing

ing which he requires from us: Which is, to
 according to those Rules or Laws which he
 has given us; which is called *Obedience*.

The way whereby we come to know what the
 Laws of God are, is partly by our own Reason,
 and more fully by the Holy Scripture: Most of
 the things which God commands are in them-
 selves so very reasonable and plain, that they who
 have not the Light of his Word, may yet very
 easily know them, even by the Guidance of their
 own Understanding; as will presently appear,
 when we come to take a view of the particulars:
 and for the farther directing and assisting our
 Reason, as also for the teaching us some part of
 his Will, which otherwise of our selves we could
 never come to know; he has given us a full ac-
 count of all his Laws in his revealed Word: And
 this is sufficient Reason to oblige us to keep them,
 because he who is our Creator and Redeemer,
 our supreme Lord, our Master and our Judge,
 requires it from us.

The chief, and most fundamental of the Laws
 of God, (and under which all the rest may be
 comprehended) are those which are commonly
 known by the Name of the Ten Command-
 ments: But for the more easy taking a full view
 both of these and all the rest of God's Laws to-
 gether, they are generally divided into three sorts;
 the first whereof contains all those Laws which
 teach us our Duty to God; the second contains
 those Laws which teach every Man his Duty to-
 wards himself; and the third contains those Laws
 which teach us our Duty towards other Men:
 Under which Division I shall endeavour to give
 as short, yet plain and comprehensive an account
 as I can of them.

First

First then, as for the Duty which we owe to God, the chief Parts or Branches of it are the following, namely, To acknowledge and believe all the things which he has made known, (of which we have already spoken :) To own that whatever he commands or threatens is very just and fit; To hope for, and expect the performance of all his Promises to us upon those very Terms and Conditions that he has set down; neither presuming upon God's Mercy, as if he would bless us although we continue in our Sins; nor despairing of his Goodness and Favour towards us, if we repent of them and serve him faithfully: To love God above all things, because he is so excellent and perfect in himself, and so good and gracious to us; and to manifest this our Love towards him by our earnest Endeavours to do all things which may please him, and by striving to enjoy and be with him, as much as we can, here in this Life by Prayer, and Meditation, and also in the Life to come by preparing our selves to be for ever happy with him in Heaven: To fear God above all things, because he is most just and powerful and will certainly punish us for our Sins, if we do not repent of them; for which Reason, we should be more afraid to offend him, than to disoblige all the Men in the World: To put our Trust in God in all manner of Danger or Distress, assuring our selves, that if we continue to serve him faithfully, he will give us Grace and Spiritual Strength, whereby we shall be enabled to resist Temptations, and perform our Duty; and also that he will either deliver us from the Troubles and afflictions of this World, if he sees it best for us, or else will give us Strength and Patience to bear them, and make them serviceable, in the end, to our eternal Happiness: To humble our selves

selves before God, in a due consideration of his
 greatness and goodness, and our own weakness
 and unworthiness; submitting our selves to his
 holy will and leasure in all things, chearfully o-
 beying whatever he commands, and, not only
 patiently, but thankfully, bearing whatever he,
 in the course of his Providence, shall think fit to
 lay upon us; and, the more we are afflicted, en-
 deavouring the more to be fruitful and abound
 in all the Works of Virtue and Piety: To ho-
 nour God inwardly by acknowledging his infi-
 nite Greatness and Goodness, and to express this
 Honour towards him in our outward Actions;
 coming to the Place of his Worship with Serious-
 ness, and behaving our selves there with Gravity
 and Decency; paying a due respect to his Minis-
 ters for the sake of their Function, being ready
 to contribute what in us lies, to the Advancement
 of his Glory; employing his own Day in Works
 and Exercises of Piety and Charity; Reading, or
 Hearing, or Meditating upon his holy Word, and
 endeavouring to get the best instructions we can
 out of it; giving due attendance upon, and Obe-
 dience unto, those Ordinances which he has ap-
 pointed, such as Preaching, Catechizing, Bap-
 tism, and the Holy communion; often calling
 to mind the Vow which we enter into at the time
 of our Baptism, whereby we are admitted into the
 visible Society and Fellowship of *Christ's* Church;
 and preparing our selves constantly and diligent-
 ly by Prayer, Meditation, Self-Examination, and
 Repentance, that we may be fit to come and eat
 of that Bread, and drink of that Cup which *Christ*
 has appointed as a remembrance of his Death and
 Sufferings for us: and also as the means whereby
 we partake of, and communicate in the Merits
 of his Passion; for which Reason it is called the
Holy

Holy Communion; never mentioning God's Name but with Serioſness and Reverence; abstaining from all vain, prophane and false Swearing, Cursing, and Blaspheming; always making a Conscience of performing faithfully whatever we have bound our selves to by an Oath, and never making a jest or a by-word of any thing that relates to God, or wherein Religion is concerned: And last of all, to worship God both publicly and privately; that is to say, to praise him for his Goodness and Excellency; to give thanks unto him for his Blessings both Spiritual and Temporal which we have received from him; to pray to him for all things necessary both for our Souls and for our Bodies; to confess our Sins unto him, and to beg the Pardon of them from him; offering up all these our Devotions in the Name and through the Mediation of *Jesus Christ* our most Blessed Saviour and Redeemer. These I say, are the main Branches, and fundamental Parts of our Duty to God: And as we must be ever careful and diligent to perform these things towards him, so must we not, upon any account, render this, or any part of this same Duty to any Thing or Person but to God alone. We must neither love, nor fear, nor hope, nor trust in, nor honour, nor worship, nor praise, nor pray to any Saint, or Angel, or Image, or any thing whatsoever, whether in Heaven or upon Earth, in the same or the like manner as we perform these things towards Almighty God. For God is a jealous God, and will not endure any Rival or Competitor in that Love, Honour, and Duty which we owe unto him.

I come now, in the *Second* place, to those Laws of God which concern the Duty of every Man towards himself: The chief Branches of which are

these that follow; that is to say, to be humble
 our own Thoughts, considering what frail and
 weak, what ignorant and forgetful Creatures we
 are; not to desire any Praise from Men, but to
 seek the Glory of every thing that may seem good
 to us, wholly and intirely to God, who is the
 Author of it; to be meek and calm in our Tem-
 per and Behaviour, never suffering Anger, or a-
 ny other Passion, to grow so strong within us, as
 to make us either say or do any thing that is unbecom-
 ing a Christian; often to consider and think
 upon our state and condition, with respect both to
 this World and that which is to come, that so we
 may be always upon our guard against Tempta-
 tions to Sin; to be patient and contented in all
 states and conditions of Life, as well in Sick-
 ness as in Health, in Adversity as in Prosperity;
 neither murmuring nor repining at any Evil that
 befalls us, nor envying those who seem to be in
 a better condition than we; not coveting, or in
 the least desiring either Riches or Preferment, but
 leaving God to see fit, and may conduce most to his Glo-
 ry; but always submitting to the secret Hand and
 Directions of God's Providence, which is in every
 thing that comes to pass in the World; to be di-
 ligent and industrious in improving our selves
 more and more in the Knowledge of Religion,
 and Practice of every sort of Virtue; making
 the best use we can of that Portion of Grace which
 we already have, that so more may be given to us;
 to be very chaste and modest both in our Actions,
 and also in our very Words and Thoughts, a-
 voiding not only all filthy Lust and Uncleanneſs,
 but even all manner of immodest Discourse; and
 mortifying and subduing all impure Desires; to
 be moderate in Eating, sober and temperate in
 Drinking, not wasting overmuch Time in Sleep
 or

or Idleness, or any sort of Recreation, unless in such as are unlawful; nor bestowing much Cost in Apparel or Furniture, or any other thing which serves only to please our Fancy, or gratify our Curiosity; but always making such an Use of those Creatures which God has given us, as those Liberties that he has allowed us, as we intend most to his Glory, the good of others, and the Health and Welfare both of our Souls and Bodies. And this shall suffice for a brief Account of that Duty which every Man by God's Law is obliged to perform towards himself.

And now, in the *Third* place, for that Duty which we owe to all other Men. By the Laws of God, we are obliged to love all Men whatsoever, (whether they are Poor or Rich, Low or High, Friends, Strangers, or Enemies) altho' not altogether as well, yet as truly and sincerely, without any Fraud or Dissimulation as we love our selves; and this our Love must never fail to be shewn, by our hearty Prayers for the Welfare of every Man, and our sincere Endeavours to prevent his Hurt, and promote his Good, as far as we have Ability and Opportunity for it; always remembering and taking care, that in our doing good unto one Man, we do not offer any Injury, or neglect any part of that Duty which we owe unto another; but doing unto every other Man, as we should judge it to be reasonable and conscionable for us to expect and desire that they should do by us, if we were in their case and condition. We must neither take away nor detain from any other Man, any thing which is his lawful Right; but whatsoever is fairly due to him, either by the Laws of God or those of the Land, or by any lawful Promise or Agreement made to or with him, must freely and

readily

dily be rendred to him, without putting him
 the trouble of suing or contending for it: The
 life of no Man must be taken away, (except by
 the lawful Authority of the Magistrate, or in
 his own just and necessary Defence) nor
 must his Body be maimed or hurt, or his good
 name injured or lessened, either by raising, or
 helping to spread any false or ill-grounded Re-
 ports concerning him, or by publishing his Faults
 or Failings, except in Justice or Charity to others:
 We become bound to do it: But, on the contrary,
 we must be ready, as we have Opportunity, to
 contribute what in us lies, to preserve the Life,
 and Health, and good Name, as well as the
 Goods and Estate of our Neighbour, if they ap-
 pear to be in Danger, either by any Accident, or
 by the malicious Design of another against them:
 We must not tempt or allure, or by our evil
 example encourage other Men to commit Sin;
 but, as we may conveniently, we must admo-
 nish, advise, reprove and exhort them for their
 souls good: Nor may we deceive any Man by
 false or equivocating Speeches, or by breaking
 such Promises as we have made to him, but must
 be true, faithful and sincere in all our Conver-
 sation, and Dealing with all Men: Those who
 are Poor, or in any Distress or Affliction, we are
 bound, to our Power to relieve help and com-
 fort; and altho' Malefactors may and must be
 punished for the publick Good, for a Terror to
 others, and for the saving and protecting the
 Lives, Estates, and good Names of honest Men,
 yet nothing of this Nature must be done either
 out of private Hatred or Resentment, or with
 greater Cruelty or Severity than what the Law
 requires, and is necessary for the true end, for
 which such Punishments are or ought to be al-

ways designed. They who are under Errors and to Matters of Religion, are to be argued with and perswaded for their Souls good, in the mildest and most gentle manner; nor should any Heat of Anger, Railing or Reviling be made use of against the greatest Hereticks or Schismatics: neither ought any Man to be persecuted or punished by the Civil Power, barely for his Mistake in Matters of Doctrine, provided that he be peaceable, and his Practice good, and that he neither attempts nor teaches any thing which tends to the disturbing of the State, or to the debauching of the Morals of the People. They who without any just Cause are publick Enemies to the State (whether they are foreign Foes or domestic Rebels) may be resisted, and under the Commission of lawful Authority, subdued by Force of Arms: and if a private Enemy unlawfully assaults, or any way endeavours to injure any Man in his Person Goods, or good Name it is lawful for the Person who is thus assaulted or injured to stand up in his own Defence, as far as the Justice and Exigence of his Case requires. But when we have thus done all that is necessary, or that we are able honestly to do, for the Preservation of our selves or the Publick; we must not proceed farther, out of Hatred or Malice to do any thing merely to vex, or grieve, or hurt even the greatest and most implacable Enemies: But on the contrary, having so secured our selves, as that they can do us no hurt, we must always be ready to do them all manner of good, that is consistent with our own necessary Safety, and with that Duty which we owe to the rest of Mankind. Husbands must love their Wives with a most tender Affection; of which they must give all the Proof they can in all their

Actions

Actions: And Wives must in like manner love,
 and also be obedient to their Husbands, and each
 of them must be strictly just and faithful to the
 other in all things. Parents must honestly en-
 deavour to provide for their Children, and to
 teach and breed them up in such a manner as may
 be best, both for their Souls and Bodies, dili-
 gently and tenderly watching over them, to keep
 them from all Harm, countenancing and encour-
 aging them in every thing that is good; and
 reproving, and sometimes correcting them, but
 without Bitterness or Passion, when they find
 them given to any thing that is evil. Masters
 and Mistresses must be just and merciful to their
 Servants, and Servants must behave themselves
 not only with Faithfulness and Diligence, but
 also with Obedience and Respect towards their
 Masters and Mistresses. The Pastors and Mini-
 sters of God's Church must be exemplary in their
 Lives, diligent and industrious in their Teaching
 and Preaching of wholesome and useful Doctrine,
 and administering and dispensing of all the Ordi-
 nances of God, that they may, as much as in
 them lies, promote the Salvation of the Souls
 that are committed to their Charge: And the
 People, on the other hand, must pay a Respect
 to their Pastors and Ministers, for their Work
 and Function's sake; giving as constant and re-
 verent Attendance as they can upon all Holy Of-
 fices, and carefully hearkening to, and putting in
 practice all such wholesome Directions and In-
 structions, as they do or shall receive from them.
 And lastly, all Magistrates and Rulers, in their
 several Stations, must govern the People that are
 under them, according to the Laws and Consti-
 tutions of the Land, administering Justice with
 Diligence and Dispatch, and without Fear, Fa-

vour, or Affection, of or to any Man; only ways tempering (as much as in them lies) Rigour and Severity of Human Laws, with Equity, Moderation and Mercy, that the Law of God requires, and is consistent with the Publick Good. And the People, on the other hand must behave themselves towards their Rulers with Honour and Reverence to their Person and Submission and Obedience to their lawful Authority, making Conscience of performing whatever the Law of the Land requires, except should so fall out, that something is thereby commanded, which is evidently contrary to God's Law: There being nothing else that can excuse a Subject from giving Obedience to the Laws and Constitutions of that Government under which he lives, except he can make it appear that God himself requires the contrary from him.

And thus I have done with the second thing which God requires from us, which is, Obedience to those Laws or Rules that he has given us. I come now to the third and last thing that God requires from us, and that is *Repentance* which although it may be reckoned as a part of our Obedience, because it is a thing commanded by God, yet since it has an equal Relation to every one of the Divine Laws, of which I have but now been giving an account, I thought it might not be improper to reserve it here to be spoken of in the last place.

Now, when a Man has transgressed any of the Laws of God, and thereby made himself liable to his Wrath and eternal Damnation; the first Step that he must take, in order to Repentance and Reconciliation with him, is to be truly sorrowful for his Sins, whereby he has provoked God Good and Gracious, so Just and Powerful a God

only
(es) d run himself into so great Danger. But the
with t ruth of this Sorrow is not to be judged of by
e L e Violence or Passionateness of it; but that
ne P an who has such a due Sense of his Sins, as to
r ha effectually moved thereby to forsake and a-
Rul mend them; he, and he only, can be said to be
erfo ally and acceptably sorrowful for them. Now
law is sorrow for Sin must, in the next place, move
ormi m to make an humble Acknowledgment, and
accept onfession of them to God: And that he may
y co e better perform this, it is necessary that he of-
Go n examine his own Conscience, and endeavour
exco bring his Sins to his Remembrance. And at
La e same time when he confesses his Sins, he must
un so humbly beg God's Pardon for them for the
appe ke of *Jesus Christ*, who died for us; and must
n hin at on serious and steadfast Resolutions, that he
thi ill amend them, and lead a better Life for the
O me to come; and that if he has done any wrong
giv a Word or Deed to any other Man whatsoever,
g th e will make Reparation and Restitution to him,
tan o the best of his Power: And to conclude all,
part e must strictly keep and fulfil these Resolutions
and when he has made them; or else all that has gone
to efore will signify nothing. For indeed Refor-
h a nation or Amendment of Life is the only thing
gh that compleats and makes up the true Nature of
to Repentance.

And thus I have endeavoured to give a brief
of and plain Account of all that God requires as
lia necessary to Salvation. And God of his Mercy
e f direct us to believe and practise accordingly,
tan and grant that in the end we may enjoy the Re-
y ward of all, even Eternal Happiness, through
ed *Jesus Christ* our Lord.

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